

## 12 JULY 2022 - MEDIA RELEASE:

### Peak horticulture advocacy body joins FTA and APSA in growing alliance

The Australian Horticultural Exporters' and Importers' Association (AHEIA) has joined the Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA) and Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) in a growing alliance of peak industry bodies focussed on reform to international shipping and air cargo supply chains.

Lesley Shield, Chief Executive Officer AHEIA states dramatically increased shipping freight rates, lack of information regarding schedules and last-minute changes are causing significant operational disruptions for horticultural shippers. Adding to the difficulties is the significant challenges caused by limited airfreight capacity, which is expected to continue for some time, and the essential requirement to maintain the export of fresh produce to key markets.

*"It is increasingly difficult for our members to remain commercially viable with these current operational conditions. We look forward to working alongside our peers across other trade commodities in constructive dialogue with government, regulators and commerce to improve processes across our international trade supply chains."*

Paul Zalai, Director FTA and Secretariat APSA has welcomed AHEIA into a growing alliance of peak industry bodies that already includes the Australian Cotton Shippers' Association, Australian International Movers Association, Australian Council of Wool Exporters & Processors, Australian Meat Industry Council, Australian Dairy Products Federation, Australian Steel Association and TyreStewardship Australia.

Zalai sees a need to expand the collective voice of peak industry bodies as being an important approach to maintain momentum in achieving much needed reform, especially important with the imminent release of Productivity Commission's draft report on Australia's Maritime Logistics Systems. *"Together we now have an opportunity to make a real difference to address the need for shipping competition reform, the winding back of stevedore and empty container park terminal access charges, regulation of container detention practices, biosecurity process review, minimum service levels and to drive key infrastructure investment"*.

*"A well-regulated economy will help Australia to prosper. Australia has world class manufacturers and producers who are supported by skilled customs brokers and freight forwarders ready to take advantage of the opportunities created by free trade agreements and those economies recovering from COVID-19. These opportunities will not be fully realised while physical access to market and costs of trade are prohibitive"* Zalai says.

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**ABOUT AHEIA** - The Australian Horticultural Exporters' and Importers' Association (AHEIA) is the peak industry body for Australian horticultural exporters and importers of fresh produce. The Association's board and members are representative stakeholders across the horticulture industry.

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**ABOUT FTA / APSA** - Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) is Australia's leading representative body for the international supply chain sector bringing together importers, exporters, customs brokers, freight forwarders, logistics service providers and industry groups. FTA also manages the Secretariat for the Australian Peak Shippers' Association (APSA) being the peak body as designated by the Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Transport to protect the interests of Australia's cargo owners and shippers in respect to shipping and international logistics services.

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